



## Memorandum

**To:** Elections Commission  
**From:** John Arntz, Director  
**Date:** November 14, 2025  
**RE:** Director's Report: November 19, 2025, Elections Commission Meeting

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Following is a brief listing of the work and related information in which the Department of Elections (Department) has been engaged since the previous report issued in relation to the Elections Commission meeting on October 15, 2025.

**I. The Department has successfully completed all pre-election and Election Day activities and released preliminary election results for the November 4 election.**

- A. The Department undertook numerous tasks to ensure the November 4 election was conducted in a free, fair, and functional manner, including: 1) processing new voter registrations and record updates, 2) administering vote-by-mail services for eligible voters, 3) offering in-person voting for one month before Election Day and at 100 polling places on Election Day, 4) recruiting, training, and placing poll workers to assist in-person voters, 5) organizing the secure retrieval of vote data and ballots on Election Night, and 6) conducting the post-election official canvass.
- B. Throughout the election cycle, the Department effectively combined its outreach efforts with responsive communication channels to guide voters through the voting process and ensure a positive experience for all San Francisco voters. The outreach program included distributing election information at neighborhood events, through collaboration with community partners, and across social media platforms. In addition to these outreach activities, during the month preceding the election, the Department responded to more than 4,000 public inquiries received by phone and email, providing timely and accurate assistance to voters regarding election-related matters.

Many voters expressed appreciation for the Department's efforts, sharing positive feedback such as the following:

"Thanks so much for always providing helpful information and super-fast responses, you really make voting easy!" – Ben M.

"Many people don't trust government officials, but SF Elections is my most trusted source. I've read all kinds of information about voting difficulties and issues, but I feel lucky to have never experienced anything like that. I always get complete, accurate, and reliable information from elections officials in San Francisco. Thanks for being the gold standard!" – Rachael

"Thank you very much for your prompt answer and easy to follow explanations. I could not find ballot information in my inbox, but clearly all I had to do was ask. I rest assured that I will always receive ballots which is so important in these times. You all are doing a great job keeping us who are not in the US connected with the process." – Cristina

"It is very reassuring that SF officials are still courteous & prompt – it seems to be a disappearing art in government institutions. I am lucky to be an SF voter." – Chip M.

- C. On Election Night, the Department issued two preliminary results reports—the first report included vote-by-mail ballots received before Election Day, and the second added results from votes cast at polling places. The Department also transmitted results to the Secretary of State (SOS) through a secure process, for which the Department had completed multiple SOS system tests and the certification process in advance.
  - 1. Since Election Night, the Department has released two updated preliminary results reports, announced each release through press releases and social media, and facilitated question-and-answer sessions with Director Arntz and members of the media and public at City Hall.
  - 2. Beginning November 5, and with each subsequent release of preliminary results, the Department posted on its website the approximate number of ballots remaining to be counted.
  - 3. The Department will issue two additional preliminary results reports before certifying the local results on Wednesday, December 3, 2025.

**II. The Department continues to count ballots and conduct other post-election tasks for the November 4 election.**

- A. Based on the number of ballots counted to date, San Francisco voter turnout for the November 4 election is nearly 50%. This percentage will continue to increase as additional valid ballots are verified and included in the count.
- B. As of November 13, the Department has counted 266,416 vote-by-mail (VBM) ballots and identified 1,400 VBM ballots as challenged. The Department will continue assisting voters in curing challenged ballots through 5 p.m. on December 1, ensuring that all eligible ballots are included in the final certified results.
  - 1. The Department has proactively contacted all voters with curable ballots within 24 hours of ballot receipt, utilizing multiple channels, ensuring that voters are informed about how to resolve issues with their ballots. To date, 517 voters have successfully cured their challenged ballots.
- C. The Department has been reviewing approximately 6,700 provisional (PV) ballots cast at polling places and the City Hall Voting Center.
- D. On November 5, the Department commenced the Official Canvass. One of the legally mandated tasks during this process is the manual tally of 1% of all ballots, including poll, vote-by-mail (VBM), and provisional (PV) ballots, all randomly chosen. The manual tally is conducted to verify that San Francisco's voting equipment has accurately tabulated the ballots and reported results, and is open to public observation, both in person and via live stream.
  - 1. On Wednesday, November 19, at 9 a.m., the Department will randomly select 1% of the ballots cast in the November 4 election for the manual tally. The following morning, Thursday, November 20, at 8:30 a.m., the Department will begin manually tallying the selected ballots.
- E. The Department has completed the retrieval of supplies and voting equipment from 100 polling places and transported them to its warehouse. Following the retrieval, Department personnel conducted an inventory of all returned items to confirm that each is properly accounted for and securely stored in accordance with established security protocols.
- F. The Department completed the processing of stipends for nearly 500 poll workers and 100 polling place providers who supported the November 4 election.

**III. The Department continues its voter outreach, promoting voter registration and election services.**

- A. The Department's Outreach Team continued to engage vulnerable and hard-to-reach communities, including individuals with disabilities, language-diverse populations, justice-involved residents, people experiencing housing insecurity, and youth.
  - 1. In October, staff collaborated with local government agencies, non-profit organizations, and campus-based student groups, including the Adult Probation Department, the Latino Task Force, the SFSU Institute for Civic and Community Engagement, the UC Law Environmental Law Student Group, and the UCSF Student Center, to provide registration assistance and share information about the November 4 election.
  - 2. To support youth civic engagement, Outreach staff conducted voting system demonstrations for students at the Islamic School of San Francisco and The Academy High School.
  - 3. Outreach staff also hosted voter resource tables at Sunday Streets SOMA, the Sunset Autumn Moon Festival, and the Chase Center and conducted educational presentation at several senior living facilities and community centers including Mariposa Gardens, the Canon Kip Senior Center, and the Chinese Newcomers Service Center, sharing information on language and accessible resources, registration eligibility, and poll worker service opportunities with interested residents.
- B. The Department continues to engage with community partners through its monthly *Outreach Community Newsletter*.
  - 1. The October 2025 edition featured key information about the November 4 Statewide Special Election, including voting options, emergency ballot delivery and pickup services, and important registration and voting deadlines. The newsletter also highlighted the Department's recruitment for a bilingual English/Vietnamese staff member and underscored that the Department is the trusted source of accurate election information, encouraging readers to follow its social media channels for up-to-date election details. The October newsletter is available at <https://www.sf.gov/outreach-community-newsletter-october-2025>.
- C. As part of the Department's efforts to expand public service opportunities for San Francisco youth, the Department welcomed a new student intern in October from Immaculate Conception Academy (ICA). Through ICA's Corporate Work Study Program, students spend one day per week at partner organizations, and the Department of Elections is the first City and County Department to participate.

#### **IV. The Department continues to carry out its operations and administrative functions.**

- A. The Department has begun reviewing its public-facing digital materials and applications to assess compliance needs and plan remediation efforts required under the federal Digital Accessibility and Inclusion Standard.
  - 1. In April 2024, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) issued a new rule under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requiring all state and local governments to ensure that their digital content meets the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Version 2.1 Level AA by April 24, 2026. This requirement applies to all City departments and commissions and covers websites, mobile applications, electronic documents, third-party software, and social media content.
  - 2. The DOJ rule also establishes five exceptions for preexisting materials, including archived content, older documents not in active use, third-party posts, individualized password-protected files, and social media posts made before April 24, 2026.

- B. The Department has opened a recruitment for a bilingual English/Vietnamese staff member in anticipation of Vietnamese becoming a mandated language for the City in 2026.
  - 1. The job posting, will remain open through November 19. To promote this opportunity, the Department has shared the announcement with its community outreach partners, distributed it to Language Accessibility Advisory Committee (LAAC) members, and posted it on the Department's social media channels.

## V. Information on Liberty Vote and its Acquisition of Dominion Voting Systems

- A. On October 9, 2025, elections departments in California received notice that Liberty Vote had acquired Dominion Voting Systems.
- B. The principal owner of Liberty Vote is Scott Leinendecker who also leads KNOWINK, which is a company based in St. Louis that provides digital tools to election jurisdictions such as the Poll Pad (a digital roster), Poll Print (a ballot-on-demand printing system), and Total Vote (a voter registration system).
- C. Poll Pad Version 3.4.8 is the one system used in California and has been certified by the Secretary of State, and a next generation of the Poll Pad, Version 3.6, has been certified by the federal Elections Assistance Commission.
- D. On October 16, Mr. Leinendecker scheduled a call with California elections officials to introduce himself and to provide information regarding the effects of Liberty Vote acquiring Dominion Voting Systems.
- E. Mr. Leinendecker emphasized that all contracts with counties will remain in place without changes, and that personnel employed with Dominion Voting Systems will continue their employment with Liberty Vote.
- F. Relatedly, the City has a contract with Dominion Voting Systems/Liberty Vote that expires on June 30, 2029.

## VI. The Secretary of State Memorandum Provides Assurances on Voting System Integrity

- A. On October 17, the Secretary of State issued a memorandum to county elections officials highlighting the reasons the integrity of the voting system remained secure in relation to the change in ownership, stating:

We want to ensure all counties are fully informed and confident that the recent acquisition of Dominion Voting Systems by Liberty Vote does not affect California certification or compliance in any way. The voting systems currently deployed across California remain fully certified, secure, and operationally unchanged.

- B. One aspect of the Secretary of States' certification of voting systems is that counties receive the software to operate their voting equipment from the Secretary of State and not from the vendor.
- C. After a voting system is certified, the Secretary of State places the reviewed and approved in escrow and provides copies of the approved software to counties.
- D. Any changes that a vendor may seek to the system must also be reviewed and approved by the Secretary of State, which would then provide a copy of the approved modifications to the counties.

**VII. Department Continued Normal Operations and Chain of Custody Protocols**

- A. The Department did not change or modify any of its processes based on Liberty Vote's acquisition of Dominion Voting Systems.
- B. Department personnel tested all voting equipment implemented for the November 2025 election prior to the change in ownership, and independent of any involvement of vendor personnel.
- C. On November 20, Department personnel will conduct a manual tally of ballots cast in the November 2025 election which is required by state law and which occurs independent of any vendor participation.
- D. The testing of the voting equipment and the manual tally provide a hands-on verification that the equipment is processing ballots accurately, and that the system is reporting results correctly.
- E. Department protocols prohibit vendor personnel from accessing any component of the voting system without the approval and supervision of the Department.

**VIII. Responses to the Commission's request for information to be included in the Director's monthly report.**

*Data on registration rates and outreach events: 1) Total new registrations, 2) New registrations by supervisory districts, 3) Tactics employed (outreach, community engagement, grant funding, etc.) and in which districts, 4) Tactics employed by districts.*

- A. Between October 1 and October 31, the Department processed a total of 2,959 affidavits of new registrants. The new registrants reside in the following Supervisorial Districts (SD): SD 1 – 212, SD 2 – 345, SD 3 – 302, SD 4 – 177, SD 5 – 320, SD 6 – 364, SD 7 – 249, SD 8 – 298, SD 9 – 278, SD 10 – 217, and SD 11 – 197.
- B. Between October 1 and October 31, the Department conducted 28 outreach events, reaching an estimated 5,877 attendees. These events were distributed across Supervisorial Districts (SD) as follows: SD 3 – 1, SD 4 – 1, SD 5 – 4, SD 6 – 10, SD 7 – 3, SD 8 – 3, SD 9 – 4, SD 10 – 1, and Out of County – 1.